



TOWN OF IPSWICH PLANNING BOARD

TOWN HALL, 25 GREEN STREET, IPSWICH, MASSACHUSETTS 01938

Final Report of the Planning Board to Special Town Meeting October 3, 2019

This document is the final report of the Planning Board, including recommendations on four proposed zoning articles on the warrant for the October 29, 2019 Special Town Meeting, prepared and submitted in accordance with Section XI.L of the Ipswich Zoning Bylaw and Section 5 of Chapter 40A of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Planning Board initiated the four zoning amendment articles and submitted them to the Select Board on July 12, 2019. In accordance with Section 5 of Chapter 40A of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Select Board, on July 15, 2019, referred the proposed zoning articles back to the Planning Board for review and public hearing.

On Thursday, August 22, 2019 in Meeting Room A in Town Hall, the Planning Board held a public hearing, after a duly advertised public notice, to consider the following zoning amendments to the Ipswich Protective Zoning Bylaw. After taking public comment on the 22nd, the Board voted to continue the public hearing to its meeting of September 12, 2019. After closing the public hearing on September 12, the Board voted as indicated below to recommend Town Meeting adopt the four zoning amendment articles.

Article 5: Off-Street Parking Amendments: amend Section VII. Off-Street Parking and Loading Regulations by requiring two parking spaces for residential units with two or more bedrooms (making no change to 1.5 space/unit for units with fewer than two bedrooms); by granting authority to the special permit granting authority to allow “tandem” parking; and by requiring electric vehicle charging provisions for projects that create fifteen or more parking spaces.

The Planning Board recommends 4-0, with one abstention (Nordberg), that the 10/29/19 Town Meeting adopt Article 5.

The Planning Board recognizes that establishing a two space per unit requirement for units with two or more bedrooms would increase the number of required off-street spaces in situations where unit households are likely to own more than one vehicle. The Board supports allowing flexibility for tandem parking (allowing vehicles to be parked in a manner that requires one to be moved for the other to be able to move), particularly where such spaces are associated with a single household having control over its spaces. Lastly, the Board supports requiring electric vehicle charging provisions for larger-scale parking area creation or where existing parking areas are being substantially increased. With the number of electric vehicles in the market increasing, the Board believes that off-street parking regulations should be updated to address charging said vehicles.

Article 6: Zoning Freeze Timeline Extension and Floodplain District Updates: amend Section XI.R, Applicability of Amendments to Outstanding Building Permits or Special Permits by increasing the amount of time from six months to twelve months within which a permittee is allowed to commence construction and not be subject to zoning changes made during that period; and amend Section IX.D.3.d, Floodplain District, by updating the language pertaining to the AO flood zone.

The Planning Board recommends 5-0 that the 10/29/19 Town Meeting adopt Article 6.

The Planning Board unanimously recommends Town Meeting adopt this article. The amendments will make the Zoning Bylaw consistent with the MA Building Code and the MA Zoning Act. The zoning freeze extension will benefit permit holders (Building and Special Permits) without detriment to the Town, and aligns with the

requirements of updated State Building Code. The change to the AO flood insurance rate zone will have no effect on property owners because there are currently no AO zones in Town, the change makes the definition consistent with the updated State Building Code.

Article 7: Average Setback Rule, Nonconforming Structures and Site Plan Review Clarifications and

Amendments: amend Section VI, Dimensional and Density Regulations by clarifying how to measure the average setback of structures on the same side of the street to determine front yard setbacks in certain situations; amend Section II.B.3.d, Nonconforming Uses and Structures by clarifying what parts of a structure are included in considering whether or not a structure conforms to the Zoning Bylaw; and amend Section X, Site Plan Review, by requiring a solar energy collection assessment at application submission and amend General Standard 12 by expanding upon what is considered energy efficient design.

The Planning Board recommends 5-0 that the 10/29/19 Town Meeting adopt Article 7.

The first two parts of this article make the respective language more clear without making any substantive changes to the Zoning Bylaw. The third part of the article will provide guidance to applicants applying for Site Plan Review as setting the expectation that the Planning Board will be reviewing an applicant's consideration of resource efficient design.

Article 8: Zoning Board of Appeals Composition: amend Section XI.F, Administration to allow a third associate member on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Planning Board recommends 5-0 that the 10/29/19 Town Meeting adopt Article 8.

This article would allow for a third associate member on the Zoning Board of Appeals. An additional associate will help balance workload for the board and mitigate the risk for meeting a quorum of members. There are five full members of the ZBA in addition to the associate members.